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# The Special Forces Operational Detachment--Alpha in 2035

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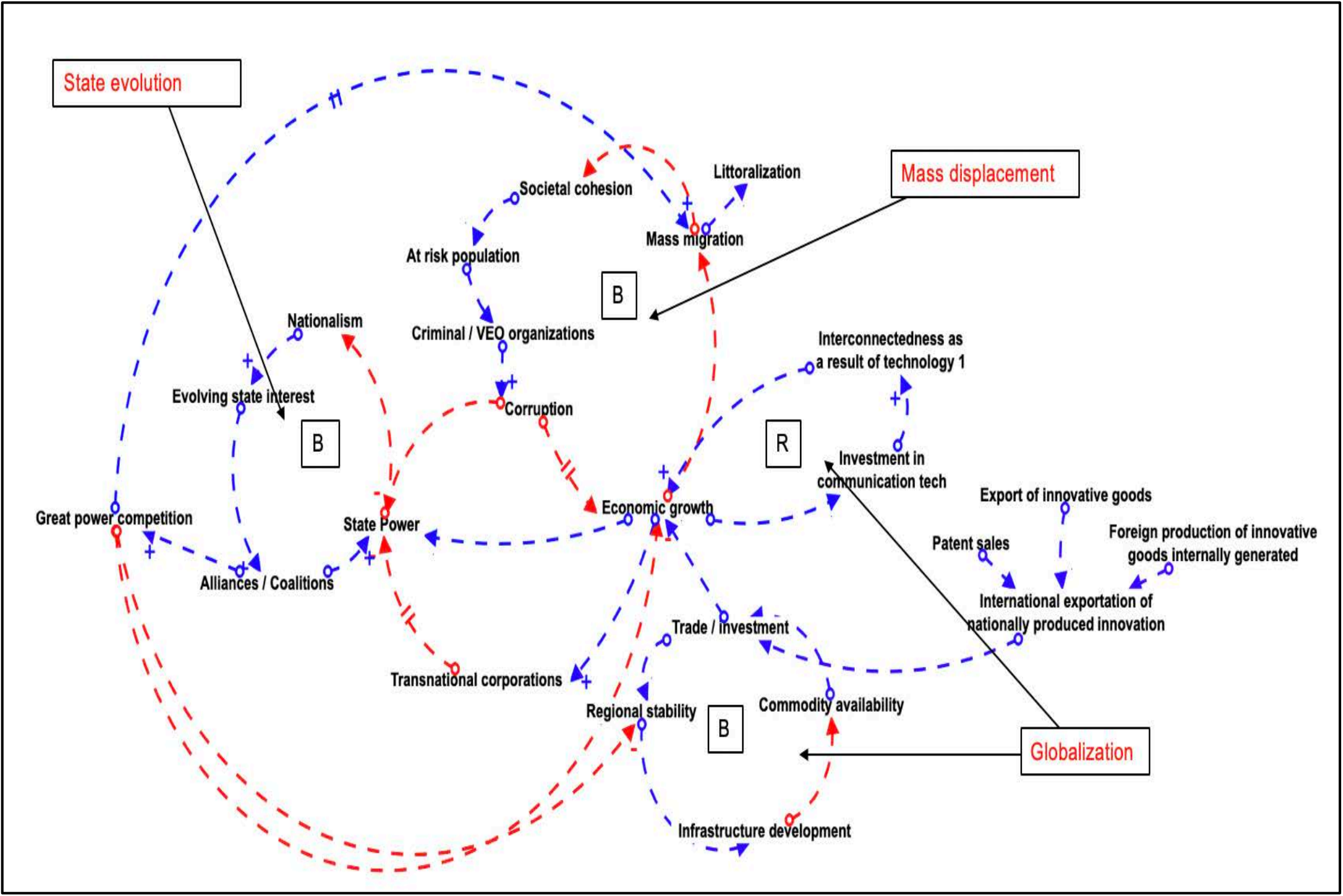
# The Special Forces Operational Detachment- Alpha in 2035



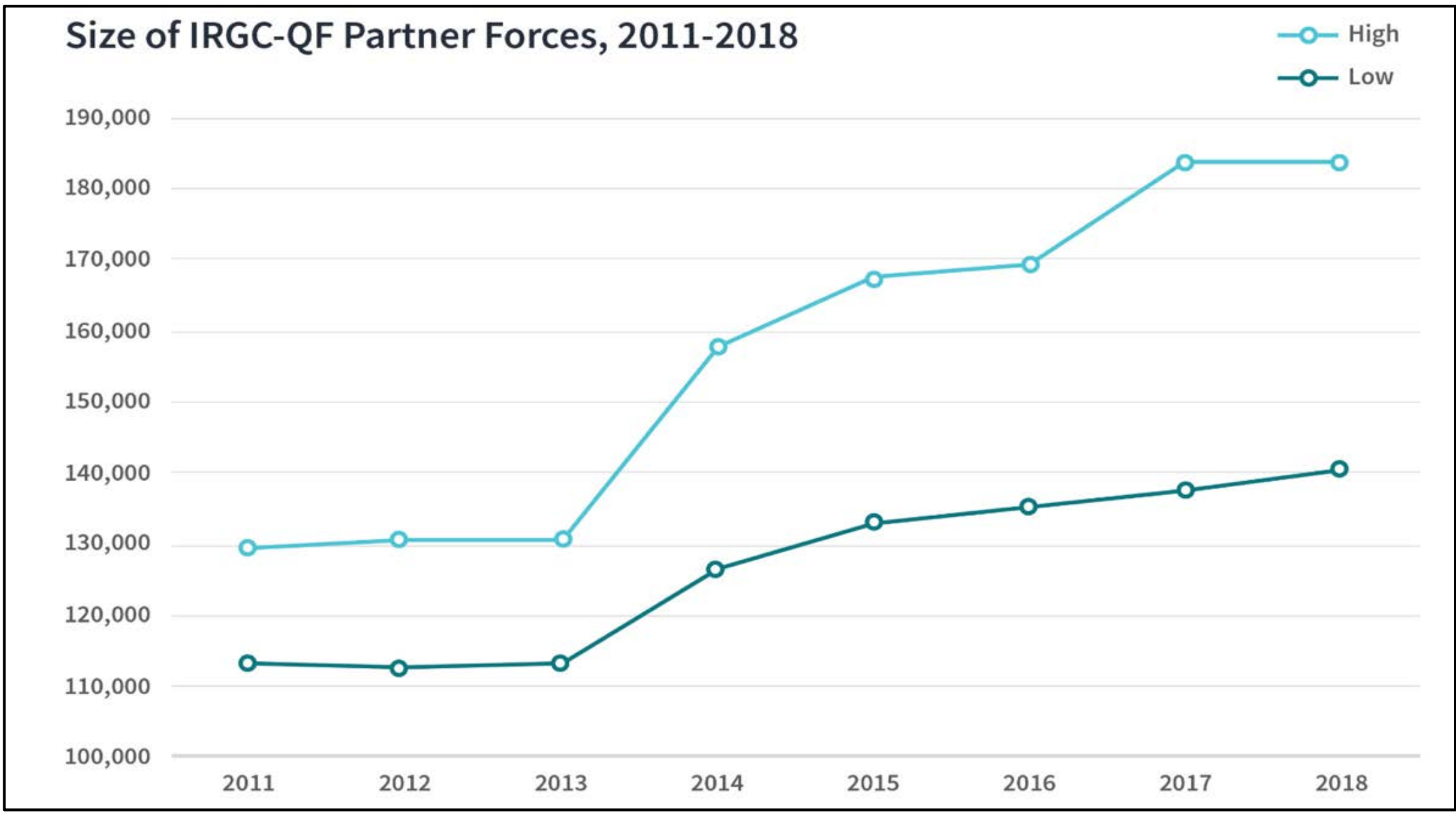
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## Background

- As the DoD executes a series of modernization efforts to prepare for Great Power Competition, it is necessary to examine the capability of the U.S. Army Special Forces to execute its core task of Unconventional Warfare in the future environment. This research was scoped to focus on the Special Forces Operational Detachment-Alpha and used 2035 as a time horizon to nest within the SOCOM Commander's Strategic Guidance.
- Research question: What modifications and optimizations does the Special Forces Operational Detachment-Alpha (SFOD-A) require to remain an effective, agile, and capable force ready for the indirect challenges of Special Warfare in 2035?



Causal Loop Diagram of the current environment



Iranian unconventional warfare expansion 2011-2018

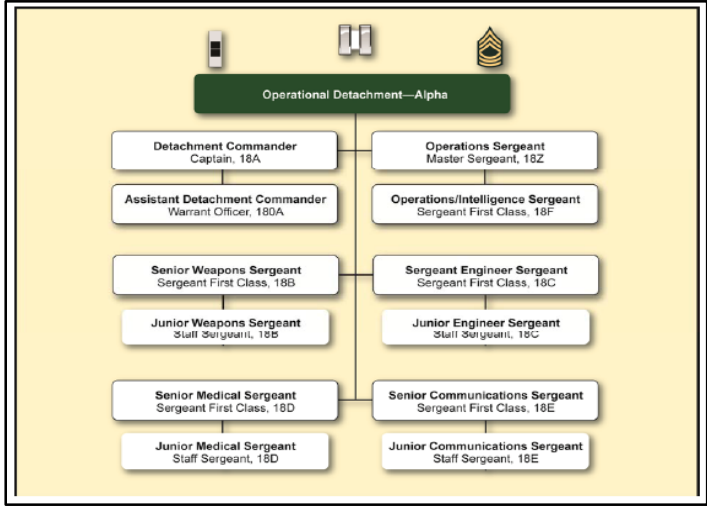
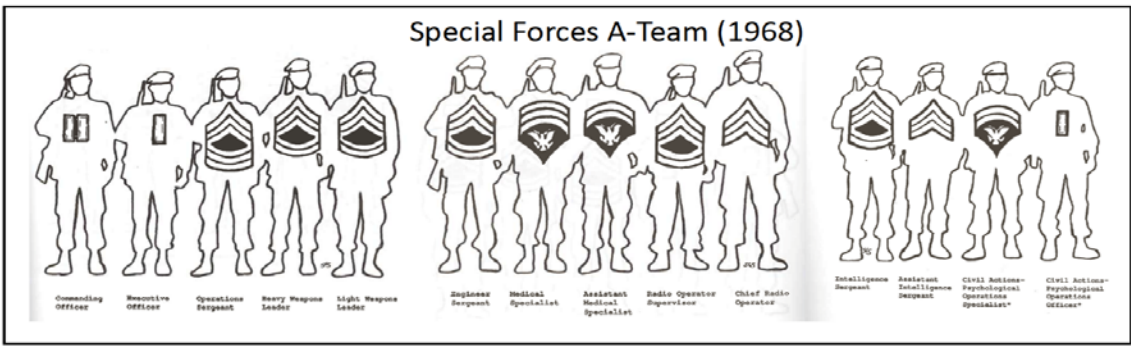
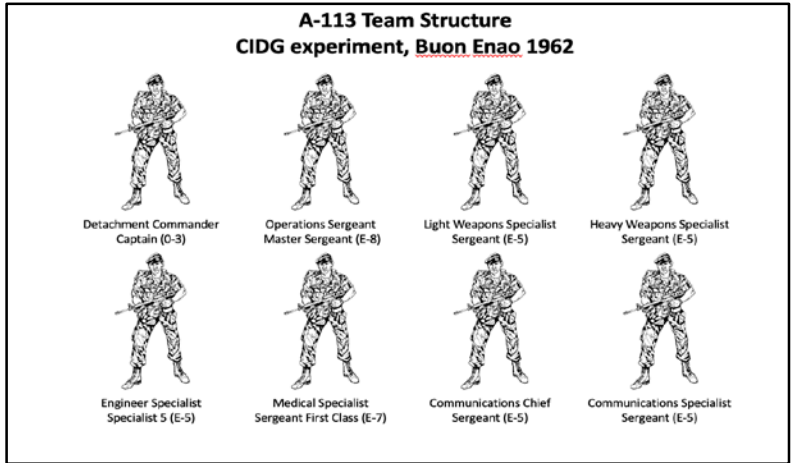
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## Research design

- (1) Determine the environmental factors which drove previous adaptation of the SFOD-A.
- (2) Examine current peer / near peer states capability to execute Unconventional Warfare tasks.
- (3) Use major global trends to depict the future environment which USSF will operate within.
- (4) Use historic factors which drove organizational adaptation to determine future required change.

## Results

- The SFOD-A has historically adapted as a result of Political, Social, Economic, and Technological change.
- These four factors are currently present and demand organizational adaptation.
- Information dominance is the core of modern unconventional warfare and the SFOD-A must have this capability organically.



Organizational adaptation of the SFOD-A over time

## The "So What"

- Inform 1<sup>st</sup> Special Forces Command of recommended adaptation and inspire additional organizational reflection.

## Next Steps

- Determine the ideal force structure of the USSF Company, Battalion, and Group to support unconventional warfare in the future.



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